(b) The offer of assistance was received by Ministry of Home Affairs in the form of a letter dated October, 4, 2004 written by Ambassador of USA.

(c) and (e) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(f) Government's position is that cooperative efforts in the field of counter-terrorism would be discussed within the existing framework of cooperation for such matters.

Extradition Treaty with Thailand

1497. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Thailand are finalising an extradition treaty;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be signed; and

(c) what is the likely achievement of the treaty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes.

(b) The discussions for concluding an Extradition Treaty with Thailand are at initial stage.

(c) Once in force, the Extradition Treaty will provide a legal framework for seeking extradition of fugitive offenders charged with extraditable offences.

Death of Indian Haj Pilgrims

1498. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Haj pilgrims who lost their lives in Saudi Arabia during Haj pilgrimage in 2004 due to stampede and other causes, separately; and

(b) the nature and extent of help provided by the Government of India and Saudi Arabia to the families of those who lost their lives during the pilgrimage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The number of Indian Haj pilgrims who lost their lives in Saudi Arabia during Haj pilgrimage in 2004 is as follows:-

(i)	in the stamped	—	16
(ii)	in the traffic accidents	—	3
(iii)	natural deaths	—	164
	Total:	—	183

(b) Under the Group Accident Compensation Scheme, next of kin of 12 of the deceased pilgrims who went through the Haj Committee of India are paid Rs.3 lakhs. The Indian Mission and the Consulate General in Saudi Arabia provide consular assistance in all cases of deaths of Indians in the transport and local burial of the dead bodies and in pursuing compensation claims. As for Government of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Haj Ministry has conveyed that they will arrange for pilgrimage for three members from the family of each pilgrim who died in the stampede during Haj 2004 at its expense.

Indo-China Cooperation

†1499. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement to enhance natural cooperation between India and China has recently been entered in order to prevent increasing terrorist activities in Asia;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any issue regarding prevention of smuggling of narcotics and an arrangement regarding non-utilisation of territory of one country to prevent terrorism within the territories of other country was discussed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) during the visit of then Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji to India in January 2002, the two sides agreed to establish a

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.